United Nations ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
8 March 2018

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment

Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Seventh meeting
Geneva, 28–30 May 2018
Item 1 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the seventh meeting

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on Monday, 28 May 2018*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Status of ratification.
3. Compliance and implementation.

* In accordance with the accreditation procedures for meetings at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to register online no later than two weeks prior to the meeting, i.e., by 14 May 2018, through the following link: https://uncdb.unece.org/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=1rHENj. Registration details are available on the website. The use of the Internet Explorer browser is recommended. In case of difficulty, please refer to the online user manual (https://www2.unece.org/wiki/display/OMR/Online+Meeting+Registration+Guidelines), or contact the secretariat by email (eia.conv@unece.org). On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva's Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see map and other practical information available from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website: http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html). In case of difficulty, please contact the Convention secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 24 39.

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4. Application of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants:
   (a) Workshop;
   (b) Terms of reference for possible guidance and next steps.
5. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building.
6. Exchange of good practices.
7. Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol and the Convention.
8. Budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance.
9. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties.
   (a) Intermediary session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention;
   (b) Next ordinary sessions of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol.
10. Inputs to related international processes.
11. Other business.
12. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda

Tentative timing: Monday, 28 May, 10–10.15 a.m.

1. The Chair of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment under the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment will invite the Working Group to adopt the agenda for its seventh meeting, as set out in the present document. The provisional agenda was prepared by the secretariat in agreement with the Bureau of the Meetings of the Parties to the two treaties.[1]

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda for the seventh meeting (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/1)

Informal document

Informal notes on the agenda (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.1)

2. Status of ratification

Tentative timing: Monday, 28 May, 10.15–11 a.m.

2. The secretariat will report on the status of the Convention and its two amendments, including the entry into force of the second amendment to the Convention on 23 October 2017. The Working Group will also be informed about the publication of the amended text of the Convention. Delegations will be invited to report on planned ratifications. The Chair will invite each Party to the Convention that has not yet ratified the two amendments to report on its preparations for ratification. In particular, further to the appeal made by the

[1] All meeting documentation will be made available on a dedicated web page for the meeting on the Economic Commission for Europe website (http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47337). Please note that documents with symbols ending in "INF." and a number are informal documents and can be located in the documents table by clicking on the "Informal Documents" tab.

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention at its seventh session (Minsk, 13–16 June 2017), the delegations of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Canada, Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Ukraine will be invited to provide detailed information on steps taken towards the ratification of the first amendment to the Convention. The missing ratifications from these eight countries are necessary for the first amendment to have effect, opening accession to the Convention to all United Nations Member States.

3. The secretariat will also report on the status of the Protocol. Delegations will be invited to report on planned ratifications. The Chair will invite each signatory State that has not completed its ratification process of the Protocol to report on its preparations for ratification.

4. Romania, as the depository of the multilateral agreement among the countries of South-Eastern Europe for implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Bucharest Agreement), will be expected to report on the status of that agreement. The signatory States, Croatia, Greece and Serbia, will be invited to report on their plans to ratify the Bucharest Agreement, and Bosnia and Herzegovina on its plans to accede to it.

5. The Working Group will be invited to propose actions that could be taken to encourage accession to or ratification of the Convention, its amendments and the Protocol and, in particular, to accelerate the operationalization of the first amendment as soon as possible.

Documentation

Informal document

Status of ratification of the Convention, its amendments and its Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.2)

3. Compliance and implementation

Tentative timing: Monday, 28 May, 11 a.m.–1 p.m. and Tuesday, 29 May, 3–4.30 p.m.

6. The Chair of the Implementation Committee will report on compliance and implementation. He will present the main outcomes of the Committee's thirty-ninth, fortieth and forty-first sessions (Geneva, 5–7 September 2017; 5–7 December 2017; and 13–16 March 2018, respectively),[2] in particular regarding the revision of draft decision VII/2 on the review of compliance with the Convention.[3] The Working Group may wish to comment the information provided and to put forward suggestions for the Committee to consider, if it so decides, in the finalization of the draft revised decision at its forty-second session (Geneva, 11–13 September 2018).

7. In addition, the Implementation Committee Chair or the secretariat will present minor modifications proposed by the Committee to the questionnaires on the implementation of the Convention and the Protocol in the period 2016–2018. The Working Group is expected to consider and agree on the draft modified questionnaires and on their subsequent circulation to the Parties. It is also expected to agree a detailed timetable, based on a Committee proposal, for the submission of completed questionnaires by the Parties, and for the generation of the subsequent draft sixth review of implementation of the Convention and draft third review of implementation of the Protocol, as required by the current workplan.[4] The secretariat will report on the publication of the fifth review of

[2] Reports on the Implementation Committee's sessions held in 2017 and 2018 are available from http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/environmental-assessment/meetings-and-events.html#/0/0/0/28089/19940

[3] See ECE/MP.EIA/2017/8 and ECE/MP.EIA/23-ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/7, para. 27.

[4] See ECE/MP.EIA/23/Add.1-ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/7/Add.1, decision VII/3–III/3, annex I.

implementation of the Convention and the second review of implementation of the Protocol, in electronic format, and the informal publication and periodic revision of the opinions of the Implementation Committee.[5]

8. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Ukraine will be invited to report on the technical advice they have received on improving their legislation to implement the Convention and the Protocol to assist them in ratifying or acceding to the two instruments, as appropriate, and on the related outcomes. The secretariat will be invited to complement the information, as needed. It will be invited also to report on the planned provision of further legislative assistance expected to be funded through a new European Union project "EU4Environment".

9. The secretariat will present the draft updated guidelines on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context for Central Asian countries prepared with funding from Switzerland, the support of consultants and in consultation with the Central Asian countries, including during three subregional workshops held in 2017. The delegations, in particular from the Central Asian countries, will be invited to comment. The Working Group is expected to invite the secretariat to finalize the guidelines based on the comments made, and to consider recommending the endorsement of the guidelines by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention at its intermediary session. As relevant, it is expected to discuss and agree on the text of a draft decision IS/2 on the guidelines.

10. The Chair of the Bureau will be invited to present any proposals on the development of a strategy and an action plan for the future application of the Convention and the Protocol that was to be undertaken in the period 2017–2020, resources permitting, in accordance with decision VII/7–III/6. The delegations are invited to comment and to consider leading or contributing to this work, for instance as part of an ad hoc drafting group.

Documentation

Updated guidelines on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context for Central Asian countries (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/3)

Draft decision IS/2 on the updated guidelines on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context for Central Asian countries (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/6)

Informal documents

Workplan implementation status (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.3)

Draft decision(s) on the review of compliance of the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.4)

Timetable for the modification of questionnaires and the preparation of the draft reviews of implementation (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.5)

Proposed modifications to the questionnaire for the implementation of the Convention in 2016–2018 (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.6)

Proposed modifications to the questionnaire for the implementation of the Protocol in 2016–2018 (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.7)

[5] *Implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (2013–2015): Fifth Review* (ECE/MP.EIA/25), *Second Review of Implementation of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (2013–2015)* (ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/9) and *Opinions of the Implementation Committee (2001–2010): Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context* (2011). The publications are available from http://www.unece.org/env/eia/publications.html.

4. Application of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants

(a) Workshop

Tentative timing: Monday, 28 May, 2–6 p.m. and Tuesday, 29 May, 10–11.30 a.m.

11. The delegations of Germany and the United Kingdom will be invited to present draft terms of reference for possible guidance on the application of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants prepared by an ad hoc working group, along with written comments received from Parties and other stakeholders. They will also be invited to co-chair a workshop to discuss the terms of reference prior to their consideration by the Working Group. In accordance with the current workplan for the Convention and the Protocol, the Implementation Committee, civil society, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development have been invited to take part in the discussions.[6] Detailed information on the workshop will be made available in advance.

(b) Terms of reference for possible guidance and next steps

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 29 May, 11.30 a.m.–1 p.m.

12. Subsequently, taking into account the workshop outcomes, the Working Group is expected to discuss and consider adopting the terms of reference, as amended. Moreover, as recommended by the Bureau, the Working Group is expected to consider taking the following actions in preparation for the intermediary session of the Meeting of the Parties:

(a) To invite the ad hoc group to pursue its work starting with the development of initial key elements of guidance on the application of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants referred to in draft decision IS/3 (para. 3) and, as relevant, subsequently prepare the guidance for consideration by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention at its eighth session;

(b) To agree on a draft decision IS/3 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the development of guidance on the application of the Convention to lifetime extension of nuclear power plants, which would build on the terms of reference and the initial elements of guidance developed;

(c) To recommend to the Meeting of the Parties other follow-up actions, as needed.

13. Finally, the Working Group is expected to decide on the possible extension of the membership of the ad hoc group to include also intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for the subsequent work.

Documentation

Draft terms of reference for possible guidance on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/4)

Draft decision IS/3 on the application of the Convention to nuclear energy-related activities (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/5)

Informal document

Draft programme of the workshop on the application of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.8)

[6] See ECE/MP.EIA/23/Add.1-ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/7/Add.1, decision VII/3–III/3, annex I, item I.9; see also ECE/MP.EIA/23-ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/7, para. 12.

5. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 29 May, 4.30–5.30 p.m.

14. Lead countries for subregional cooperation and capacity-building activities foreseen in the workplan and the secretariat will be invited to report on the outcomes of, or preparations for, activities in the following subregions:

(a) South-Eastern Europe, including a session on implementation of the Convention, the Protocol and the Bucharest Agreement (Vodice, Croatia, 14–15 September 2017). The countries of South-Eastern Europe will also be invited to report on actions taken to increase the membership of the Bucharest Agreement and on possible arrangements for the first meeting of the Parties;

(b) Baltic Sea, with a meeting to be organized by Finland and Sweden during the first week of September 2018;

(c) Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, including a subregional workshop on lessons learned from capacity-building activities funded by European Union's Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighbourhood (EaP GREEN) programme (Kyiv, 31 October–2 November 2017);

(d) Central Asia, with a subregional workshop to discuss experience from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus and draft updated guidelines for Central Asian countries (Kyiv, 2 and 3 November 2017), with funding from Switzerland.

15. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information and, as needed, to provide advice and agree on actions to ensure the implementation of or follow-up to these activities.

6. Exchange of good practices

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 29 May, 5.30–6 p.m.

16. The secretariat and lead countries or organizations will be invited to describe their plans for workshops or half-day seminars specified in the current workplan that relate to the exchange of good practices. The Chair of the Bureau may wish to report on any advice by the Bureau on that matter.

17. The secretariat or the Chair will inform the Working Group about the outcomes of the workshop to be organized under the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents in Mechelen, Belgium, on 16 and 17 May 2018, to which the Bureau members and focal points under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol are also invited. The workshop aims to showcase practical examples of cooperation and coordination between land-use planners and industrial safety experts for industrial accident prevention, including in a transboundary context, and to promote the application of the joint *Guidance on Land-use Planning, Siting of Hazardous Activities and the Related Safety Aspects*.[7] The Working Group is invited to note and comment the information, including regarding possible follow-up activities.

18. The secretariat will report on its publication of the *Good Practice Recommendations on the Application of the Convention to Nuclear Energy-related Activities* (ECE/MP.EIA/24).[8] As decided by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention at its seventh session, Parties will be invited to provide information to the Working Group on the usefulness of the Good Practice Recommendations.[9]

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[7] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.18.II.E.6, available from http://www.unece.org/env/eia/publications.html.

[8] Available from http://www.unece.org/env/eia/publications.html.

[9] See ECE/MP.EIA/23/Add.1–ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/7/Add.2, decision VII/6, para. 6.

7. Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol and the Convention

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 30 May, 10–11.15 a.m.

19. The secretariat and delegations from the countries concerned will be invited to report on the following activities undertaken since June 2017 to promote ratification and application of the Protocol and the Convention:

(a) The development of national guidance documents on strategic environmental assessment (Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine);

(b) Recent workshops, including training, on the application of the Protocol in Azerbaijan and Belarus;

(c) National conferences on the results of the EaP GREEN-funded activities undertaken in the period 2013–2017 and further priorities (Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Republic of Moldova and Belarus);

(d) Progress in implementing a pilot project on strategic environmental assessment in Kazakhstan;

(e) Finalization of a manual for trainers on the application of the Protocol.

The secretariat and delegations will also be invited to report on the plans for implementing further capacity-building activities included in or related to the current workplan with the funding expected to be available through the EU4Environment project for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

20. The secretariat will present a concept note on guidance for the assessment of the health impacts of plans and programmes and for the involvement of health authorities expected to be developed in cooperation with the World Health Organization, with funding from the European Investment Bank, in accordance with the current workplan. The Working Group is expected to comment on the concept note and to provide guidance for its further development.

21. Germany will be invited to present two fact sheets containing case studies on its application of the Protocol to the Federal Requirements Plan 2015 for the Energy Transmission Grid and the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan 2015–2030. Other delegations will be invited to propose cases in which the Protocol or the Convention has been applied for the preparation of fact sheets on the application of strategic environmental assessment or transboundary environmental impact assessment, to be published on the Convention and the Protocol's website by the secretariat.

22. A representative of the International Association for Impact Assessment will be invited to report on the preparation of two-page informal pamphlets or "FasTips" on key issues in strategic environmental assessment practice and to provide information on the topics selected. The secretariat will present the draft "FasTips" on the Convention and the Protocol that it has prepared for consideration of the Working Group. The secretariat is also expected to report on the translation of several existing "FasTips" into Russian.

23. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information and, as relevant, provide advice for the implementation or follow-up of the activities.

Documentation

Guidance on the assessment of health impacts of plans and programmes and for the involvement of health authorities: concept note (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.9)

8. Budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 30 May, 11.15 a.m.–12 p.m.

24. The secretariat will report on contributions and expenditures with regard to the Convention's and Protocol's trust fund. Subsequently, as requested by the Meetings of the

Parties, the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau will prepare a financial report extending until the end of June 2018.[10] The secretariat will also inform the Working Group about the results of its requests for funding from the European Union to promote ratification and application of the Protocol and the Convention in 2018–2021 in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in the framework of the EU4Environment project and from Germany for technical assistance to Central Asian Countries.

25. The Chair will report on the Bureau's recommendations regarding expenditures for the intermediary session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, which was originally not budgeted in the period 2017–2020.

26. The Chair will also report on the Bureau's consideration of criteria for financial support to meeting participants and its selection of experts from non-governmental organizations to receive, subject to the availability of funds, financial assistance for their participation in meetings under the Convention and its Protocol. Finally, the Chair will report on any proposed further measures undertaken or planned by the Bureau to encourage Parties that have so far not pledged anything to make contributions, and Parties that have so far only committed limited funds or in-kind contributions, to raise their contributions during the current and future budget cycles.[11]

Documentation

Informal document

Status of the trust fund: contributions and expenditures (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.10)

9. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 30 May, 12–1 p.m. and 3–3.30 p.m.

(a) Intermediary session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention

27. The Chair and the secretariat will report on the initiation of preparations for the intermediary session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, to be convened in Geneva "at a date to be determined but tentatively scheduled for late 2018 or early 2019" to finalize the deliberations and to reach consensus on draft decision VII/2 on the review of compliance with the Convention, and, as needed, to address additional issues that might arise.[12] The Chair will inform the Working Group that further to its consultation with the secretariat, the Bureau has agreed that the intermediary session will be held in Geneva, from 5 to 7 February 2019.

28. The Chair will also present a Bureau proposal for the provisional annotated agenda for the intermediary session. The Working Group is expected to agree on the provisional agenda. The Working Group is also expected to discuss the chairmanship of the high-level segment of the session, taking into account any proposals from the Bureau.

29. In June 2017, the Meetings of the Parties extended the mandate of the current Chair of the Bureau, Mr. George Kremlis (European Commission), until the intermediary session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention. Delegations will therefore be invited to put forward and consider nominations for the chairmanship of the Bureau beyond the intermediary session, considering any suggestions from the Bureau.

[10] See ECE/MP.EIA/23/Add.1-ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/7/Add.1, decision VII/4–III/4, para. 13.

[11] Ibid., paras. 4–5.

[12] See ECE/MP.EIA/23-ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/7, para. 27.

Documentation

Informal document

Provisional annotated agenda and preparations for the intermediary session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.11)

(b) Next ordinary sessions of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol

30. The Chair will present the Bureau's proposal for a provisional schedule of meetings for the intersessional period 2017–2020, including the eighth and fourth sessions of the Meetings of the Parties preliminarily scheduled to be held from 9 to 11 December 2020. The Working Group will be invited to consider and agree the proposed provisional dates for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties and for the other official meetings. Delegations may also wish to put forward offers to host the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties.

Documentation

Informal document

Provisional schedule of meetings 2018–2020 (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2018/INF.12)

10. Inputs to related international processes

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 30 May, 3.30–4 p.m.

31. The Bureau Chair will be invited to report on the outcomes of the joint meeting of the chairs of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) multilateral environmental agreements and the Committee on Environmental Policy (Geneva, 13 November 2017), as well as on the segment on multilateral environmental agreements held in the framework of the twenty-third session of the Committee on Environmental Policy (Geneva, 14–17 November 2017).

32. The secretariat will report on the outcomes of the meeting of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the ECE Region (Geneva, 1–2 March 2018), and on a side event being organized by Czechia on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through the participation of all, with a focus on environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment.

33. The secretariat will also report on relevant developments within and beyond the ECE region, notably regarding China's "Belt and Road" initiative.

34. The Working Group will be invited to comment the information provided and, as relevant, to advise on further actions to be taken.

11. Other business

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 30 May, 4–4.30 p.m.

35. Delegations wishing to raise other business should contact the Chair and the secretariat as soon as possible ahead of the meeting.

12. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 30 May, 4.30–6 p.m.

36. The Working Group is expected to agree on the main decisions taken at its seventh meeting, to authorize the secretariat to complete the report after the meeting under the guidance of the Chair and to confirm the date and venue of its next meeting.

III. Organization of work

Date and time	*Item No.*	*Agenda item*
Monday, 28 May		
10–10.15 a.m.	1	Adoption of the agenda
10.15–11 a.m.	2	Status of ratification
11 a.m.–1 p.m.	3	Compliance and implementation
2–6 p.m.	4 (a)	Application of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants: workshop
Tuesday, 29 May		
10–11.30 a.m.	4 (a)	Application of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants: workshop (continued)
11.30 a.m.–1 p.m.	4 (b)	Application of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants: terms of reference for possible guidance and next steps
3–4.30 p.m.	3	Compliance and implementation (continued)
4.30–5.30 p.m.	5	Subregional cooperation and capacity-building
5.30–6 p.m.	6	Exchange of good practices
Wednesday, 30 May		
10–11.15 a.m.	7	Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol and the Convention
11.15 a.m.–12 p.m.	8	Budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance
12–1 p.m.	9	Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties
3–3.30 p.m.	9	Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties (continued)
3.30–4 p.m.	10	Inputs to related international processes
4–4.30 p.m.	11	Other business
4.30–6 p.m.	12	Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting